

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00
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O 061535Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1946
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0945

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP RH (VANCE, CYRUS)
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: POSSIBLE OWEN-VANCE MEETING WITH SALISBURY
PARTICIPANTS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

REF: STATE 088254

1. GOB OFFICIALS MAKE NO SECRET (AS WE HAVE FREQUENTLY
REPORTED) OF THEIR FEELING THAT BOTSWANA IS NEGLECTED BY
RANKING US OFFICIAL VISITORS, EVEN THOSE VISITING ELSEWHERE
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. WHILE PRESIDENT KHAMA AND OTHER LEADERS
ARE TOO COURTEOUS TO VOICE THEIR FEELINGS EXCEPT AT RARE
MOMENTS, THE FEELING IS ALWAYS JUST BELOW THE SURFACE.

2. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND, THEREFORE, THAT GOB WOULD
BE PLEASED TO HOST MEETING OF SALISBURY PARTICIPANTS AND
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SECRETARIES VANCE AND OWEN (REFTEL, PARA 3). INDEED, I
BELIEVE THEY WOULD WELCOME IT AS RECOGNITION OF THEIR
CAREFUL, OBJECTIVE AND EVEN-HANDED APPROACH WHICH HAS
LEFT THEM ON RELATIVELY GOOD TERMS WITH ALL PARTIES IN
RHODESIAN CONFLICT.

3. OUR MAJOR CONCERN WOULD BE THAT, IN THEIR

ENTHUSIASM, GOB WOULD TEND TO OVERLOOK THE SERIOUS LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS OF ACCOMMODATING MEETING IN THIS SMALL PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF 30,000 PERSONS CONSTRUCTED IN THE ELEVEN YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE. WITH LIMITED GOB RESOURCES, EMBASSY WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE TO ASSUME MAJOR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY.

4. FIRST AMONG PROBLEMS, AS SUGGESTED REFTTEL, IS GABORONE AIRPORT WHICH HAS 5,000-FOOT RUNWAY AT 3100 FEET ALTITUDE. THIS HAS BEEN A KEY OBSTACLE TO PAST MEETINGS; THE LARGEST AIRCRAFT IT CAN ACCOMMODATE IS C-130. THERE ARE AN AVERAGE OF FOURTEEN REGULAR FLIGHTS A WEEK BY HAWKER SIDDELEY 748 OR VISCOUNT AIRCRAFT WITH DESTINATIONS JOHANNESBURG OR (SIX TIMES WEEKLY) LUSAKA.

5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

(A) COMMUNICATIONS. THE RELATIVELY ANTIQUATED AND ELEMENTARY EMBASSY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (ONE ASR AND ONE BACKUP) WOULD MAKE NECESSARY THE "CAN DO" COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT AND C&R PERSONNEL. TELEX FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE AT TWO LOCATIONS: HOLIDAY INN AND POST OFFICE. BOTH OPERATE WITH HIGH FRUSTRATION FACTOR.

(B) TRANSPORTATION. WE AND UK HICOM COULD MOBILIZE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE VEHICLES NECESSARY TO MEET NEEDS WHICH ARE NOT GREAT GIVEN RELATIVELY SHORT DISTANCES, E.G., 1.5 MILES BETWEEN AIRPORT AND DOWNTOWN. DEPARTMENT
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WILL RECALL THAT RHODESIAN RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICE IS OPEN FROM SALISBURY VIA BULAWAYO TO GABORONE AND CAPE TOWN.

(C) HOTELS. THERE ARE TWO SUITABLE HOTELS: HOLIDAY INN (116 ROOMS) AND PRESIDENT HOTEL (27 ROOMS) WHICH ARE GENERALLY FULLY BOOKED BY SOUTH AFRICANS ON WEEKENDS. WITH A WEEK'S ADVANCE NOTICE AND GOB HELP, WE COULD POSSIBLY ASSURE OURSELVES (WITHOUT INCIDENT) OF HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERHAPS 20 PERSONS, PROPORTIONATELY FEWER IF NOTICE IS RECEIVED LATER. IN ADDITION, GUEST ROOMS OF EMBASSY AND UK HICOM STAFF HOUSES COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR ANOTHER 20 PERSONS. FRIENDS OF EMBASSY/HICOM PERSONNEL COULD BE COUNTED ON FOR ANOTHER 10 OR 15 ACCOMMODATIONS.

(D) RESTAURANTS. PUBLIC EATING FACILITIES ARE LIMITED TO THE TWO HOTELS.

(E) TELEPHONE. CALLS CAN BE MADE TO U.S. VIA SATELLITE (CAPE TOWN SWITCH) WITH CHANCE OF REASONABLY GOOD CONNECTIONS. DELAYS CURRENTLY RANGE FROM FIVE TO SIXTY MINUTES.
NORLAND

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